



**BETHLEHEM UNITED  
CHURCH OF CHRIST**

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**Sunday, December 3, 2023**

**First Sunday of Advent**

**Worship Leader: Randy Koppenhaver**

**Organist: Polly Jeanty**

*If listening from your car, please tune your car radio to 101.3 FM*

**\*= Please rise in body or spirit**

**CENTERING THOUGHT:** *We gather together in this season of Advent anticipating hope, praying for peace, attempting to cultivate joy and share love amidst commotion, grief, despair and uncertainty. What is giving you hope, today? It can be something we often take for granted, such as "the sun in the sky is giving me hope." It can be something that surprises you. What is giving you hope?<sup>(a)</sup>*

**RINGING OF THE BELLS**

**THE LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT CANDLE (a)**

**CHORAL CALL TO WORSHIP #216 v.1 "While We are Waiting, Come"**  
**While we are waiting, come. While we are waiting, come.**  
**Jesus, our Lord, Emmanuel, While we are waiting, come.**

**WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS**

**PRELUDE**

\*CALL TO WORSHIP (Inspired by Isaiah 64) {a}

Leader: Tear open the heavens and bring forth your presence.

We watch and we wait for the glory to come.

All: **We gather with hope, remembering your mercy.**

**Lead us in love; shine from above.**

Leader: Awaken the earth, enflame and enflesh

We watch and we wait for what's birthing ahead.

All: **We gather with hope, remembering your justice.**

**Revive us, restore us; shine from above.**

Leader: Make us your love wave to broaden your reach

We watch and we wait for your deeds to appear.

All: **We gather with hope, remembering your handiwork.**

**Make us, mold us; shine from above.**

\*OPENING PRAYER {a}

**EI Shaddai – God of the mountains who quake at your presence,**

**You meet us in our memory of you.**

**We'd invite you to come down and dwell among us,**

**Yet we know that you are already and always with us—**

**Emmanuel, in our collective memory from ages past—**

**God beside us, God before us, God behind us, and God within us.**

**Let your face shine so that we might remember you more clearly.**

**Give us life and we will call on your name**

**As we worship you in spirit and in truth.**

**Amen.**

\*OPENING HYMN (insert)

“Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus”

PRAYER OF TRANSFORMATION (Inspired by Hope by Jason Robert Brown) {a}

Let us pray:

We come singing songs of hope, this morning.

Though we may not be inspired much right now, **we still sing.**

Though it may take us time to sit with our hampered thoughts and sift through the growing pile of despair, **we still sing.**

In spite of everything ridiculous and sad—

Though we may be beyond belief, depressed, confused, and mad—

Some of us got dressed, and

Some of us made it out of bed or out the door

And **we still sing** of hope.

God, remind us that we have gotten through a lot of things we didn't think we could—  
that you have not left us nor forsaken us—  
That our individual and collective ancestors still sang new songs in the valleys of death.  
And so, **we still sing**, too.  
Embolden us as we try to show the world the we can find hope even when it seems impossible to bear.  
**Hope must be there.**  
**Fear never wins.**  
**The work begins in us.**  
(time for reflection)

#### WORDS OF GRACE {C}

One: As we experience hope, living God,  
All: **as new paths and fresh opportunities open up before us, we experience the peaceful energy of your presence.**  
One: In God's presence you are free.  
All: **Thanks be to God! Amen.**

\*RESPONSE                    "Gloria Patri"  
**Glory be to the Father, And to the Son and to the Holy Ghost;  
As it was in the beginning, Is now and ever shall be, world without end.  
Amen, Amen.**

#### SCRIPTURE READINGS

##### Isaiah 64:1-9

O that you would tear open the heavens and come down,  
so that the mountains would quake at your presence—  
as when fire kindles brushwood  
and the fire causes water to boil—  
to make your name known to your adversaries,  
so that the nations might tremble at your presence!  
When you did awesome deeds that we did not expect,  
you came down, the mountains quaked at your presence.  
From ages past no one has heard,  
no ear has perceived,  
no eye has seen any God besides you,  
who works for those who wait for him.  
You meet those who gladly do right,  
those who remember you in your ways.

But you were angry, and we sinned;  
because you hid yourself we transgressed.  
We have all become like one who is unclean,  
and all our righteous deeds are like a filthy cloth.  
We all fade like a leaf,  
and our iniquities, like the wind, take us away.  
There is no one who calls on your name,  
or attempts to take hold of you;  
for you have hidden your face from us,  
and have delivered us into the hand of our iniquity.  
Yet, O LORD, you are our Father;  
we are the clay, and you are our potter;  
we are all the work of your hand.  
Do not be exceedingly angry, O LORD,  
and do not remember iniquity for ever.  
Now consider, we are all your people.

**Mark 13:24-37**

'But in those days, after that suffering,  
the sun will be darkened,  
and the moon will not give its light,  
and the stars will be falling from heaven,  
and the powers in the heavens will be shaken.  
Then they will see "the Son of Man coming in clouds" with great power and glory. Then he will  
send out the angels, and gather his elect from the four winds, from the ends of the earth to the  
ends of heaven.  
'From the fig tree learn its lesson: as soon as its branch becomes tender and puts forth its  
leaves, you know that summer is near. So also, when you see these things taking place, you  
know that he is near, at the very gates. Truly I tell you, this generation will not pass away until  
all these things have taken place. Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will not pass  
away.  
'But about that day or hour no one knows, neither the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but only  
the Father. Beware, keep alert; for you do not know when the time will come. It is like a man  
going on a journey, when he leaves home and puts his slaves in charge, each with his work,  
and commands the doorkeeper to be on the watch. Therefore, keep awake—for you do not  
know when the master of the house will come, in the evening, or at midnight, or at cockcrow,  
or at dawn, or else he may find you asleep when he comes suddenly. And what I say to you I  
say to all: Keep awake.'

SERMON

"Where is God?"

\*HYMN #92 all

"O Come, O Come Emmanuel"

## ADVENT SERVICE OF HOLY COMMUNION

(Written by: Rev. Andrew O'Neil, St. Paul's United Church, Riverview, New Brunswick)

### INVITATION

#### PREFACE

God be with you. **And also with you.**

Lift up your hearts. **We lift them up to God.**

Let us give thanks to God. **It is right to give God thanks and praise.**

### THE STORY

In the rich dark of winter, God makes an astounding promise: "I will cause a righteous Branch to spring up." (Jeremiah 33:15)...

... We gather at this table, praying that crooked ways be made straight, that valley's peace be lifted up and mountain's might brought low so that all God's people might rejoice together, saying:

**Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might, Heaven and earth are full of your glory. Hosanna in the highest! Blessed is the one that comes in the name of the Lord. Hosanna in the highest!**

### WORDS OF INSTITUTION

We give thanks for the mystery and wonder revealed that first night...

... With your people of all times and places, we await with hope the fulfillment of your vision for all creation.

**Bless us, O God, and these your gifts. Encourage us to share your life and love, which make us, and the gifts we share, truly holy.**

Transform us, God, and your world, and bless your children:

those who feel alone or afraid...

those who whose souls and homes are broken by violence...

those who will go hungry, thirsty, and cold tonight...

those who long only to hear that they are loved...

God made known in Jesus Christ, **hear our prayer.**

We pray these things, trusting in God's faithfulness revealed:

**Christ has died. Christ is risen. Christ will come again.**

## SHARING OF THE BREAD AND CUP

### PRAYER FOLLOWING COMMUNION

At this table, Christ is the host, welcoming all who hunger. At our tables, may Christ be our guest this day and always, that we might welcome hope, peace, joy, and love into our lives, and become hosts to God's presence and people.

**God of Love, guide us to the stables of our world, where the lonely and longing gather. Lead us to the mangers of our time, where hope and renewal are born again. Make us heralds of your love and joy. Amen.**

RESPONSE #525 refrain only

"One Bread, One Body"

### PASTORAL PRAYER <sup>(b)</sup> ... LORD'S PRAYER

**Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread and forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen.**

CALL TO THE OFFERING<sup>(B)</sup> (Jingle Change for the month of December supports the Christmas Fund)

OFFERTORY

Polly Jeanty

\*OFFERTORY RESPONSE

# Doxology

For Advent

Em G C D7 G D G C G  
Praise God from whom all bless - ings flow. Praise God, all crea - tures

5 Am Bm7 Em Am Em B7 Em A7 D Em  
here\_\_\_\_\_ be - low. Praise God a - bove, ye heaven - ly host. Praise

10 D Bm G C Am D7 G D Em Bm G  
Fa - ther, Son, and Ho - ly Ghost. Re - joice! Re - joice! Em -

15 C D7 Em D G C G Am Em Bm Em  
man - u - el Shall come to thee, O Is - ra - el.

Words: Thomas Ken, 1674  
Music: 15th Century French

VENI EMMANUEL  
LM with Refrain

Text and tune adapted by Dean McIntyre, The United Methodist General Board of Discipleship, PO Box 340003, Nashville TN 37203-0003. Telephone 615-340-7073. Website <http://www.umcworship.org>. Email address: [music@gbod.org](mailto:music@gbod.org). Text and tune are public domain.

## \*PRAYER OF DEDICATION <sup>(b)</sup>

**God of hope, we offer you our gifts, knowing you can do with them more than we can ask or imagine. Bless what we offer as tangible signs of your love at work in a world on edge, and as symbols of the hope we share in Jesus Christ, our Lord and Friend. Amen.**

## \*CLOSING SONG "Go Now in Peace"

***Go now in peace. Never be afraid.  
God will go with you each hour of ev'ry day.  
Go now in faith. Steadfast strong and true.  
Know he will guide you, in all you do.  
Go now in love, and show you believe.  
Reach out to others so all the world can see.  
God will be there, watching from above.  
Go now in peace, in faith, and in love. A-men, A-men, A-men.***

## COMMISSION AND BLESSING {c}

One: In the darkened sky that hangs over humanity, hope seems a futile dream.

**All: But we have hope as we leave this church.**

One: Hope stirs in the resolution to celebrate the joys of each day.

**All: Hope stirs as we assert our confidence in the Christian community.**

One: Hope comes clear when we pass through the testing times, battered but unbroken.

**All: Our hope finds a focus in the journey of a young couple to Bethlehem 2000 years ago – a journey in which we join.**

## POSTLUDE

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\*\*liturgies and prayers used with permission from (a) ucc.org, (b) <https://presbyterian.ca/worship/>, (c) Sparks, David. *Prayers to Share-Year B*, Wood Lake Books, 2002

## **ANNOUNCEMENTS:**

- For some time, the Merry Christians have been collecting cash register receipts only from the Kiel Piggly Wiggly store. No other area store receipts are of any use to us. We receive a monetary rebate for every dollar that is spent on groceries. Please help us help others by placing your used store receipts in the box under the mailboxes in the fellowship hall. Thank you! Bethlehem Merry Christians
- Sunday, Dec. 10 – 3:30pm – “Sing Joy” a concert by the United Christmas Choir – The 50+ member choir has members from four area UCC churches, including Bethlehem’s Kathy Bowe, Lora Mathes, Marie Mueller, Rick Rabe, and Pastor Randy. The concert will be held at St. Peter’s UCC in Kiel.
- For many years Bethlehem UCC has supported Heifer International through an auction hosted by the Bethlehem Merry Christians. In order to make a donation in 2023, the Merry Christians are asking you to make a monetary gift by Sunday, December 10. Checks can be made payable to: Bethlehem Merry Christians. And mailed to: Lora Mathes, 21607 CTH C, Kiel, WI 53042. Thanks in advance for your generosity to help those in need. ~Bethlehem Merry Christians





The Bethlehem Ladies are taking orders for Poinsettias. They are \$9 each and the colors available are red, white and pink. The last Sunday to order Poinsettias is **TODAY!** The Poinsettias can be taken home on Christmas Day after worship service. The sign up is on the table in the fellowship hall. Cash or checks to "Bethlehem Ladies" can be given directly to Ginny Schultz or put in her mail box. Thank you!!!

## **COMMUNITY ANNOUNCEMENTS**

InCourage Domestic Abuse Shelter of Manitowoc is hosting a charity event on Sat. Feb 24 – info on the bulletin board in the fellowship hall.

### **2023 Bethlehem UCC Leadership Team**

Elder/President - Steven Voland (920)286-0162 or [svoland44@gmail.com](mailto:svoland44@gmail.com)

Elder - Traci Rabe (920)894-7903 or [trabefamily5@gmail.com](mailto:trabefamily5@gmail.com)

Elder - Lee Watson (920)562-0588 or [lwatson@kiel.k12.wi.us](mailto:lwatson@kiel.k12.wi.us)

Deacon - Ross Westphalen (920)629-0193 [rossw@forhealthycows.com](mailto:rossw@forhealthycows.com)

Deacon/Secretary - Kathy Bowe (920)894-7243 [LandKBowe@outlook.com](mailto:LandKBowe@outlook.com)

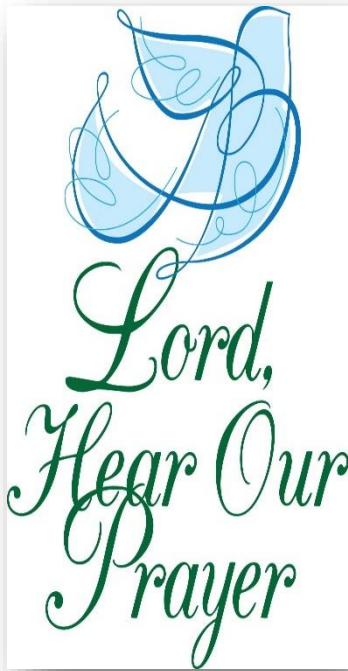
Financial Secretary - Ruthie Rumpff (920)946-5849 [srumpff@tm.net](mailto:srumpff@tm.net)

Treasurer - Jane Umland (920)286-2175 [jm59umland@gmail.com](mailto:jm59umland@gmail.com)

Pastor - Randy Koppenhaver (920)286-2531 [randynmel5@gmail.com](mailto:randynmel5@gmail.com)

### **December Worship Services:**

- Sunday, December 3; 9:30am – First Sunday of Advent Communion Service
- Sunday, December 10; 9:30am – Second Sunday of Advent Service
- Sunday, December 17; 9:30am – Third Sunday of Advent Children's Christmas Program
- Thursday, December 21; 7:00pm – Blue Christmas Service
- Sunday, December 24; 9:30am – Fourth Sunday of Advent Service
- Sunday, December 24; 7:00pm – Christmas Eve Stories & Candlelight Service
- Monday, December 25; 9:30am – Christmas Day Communion Service



**Those in our thoughts and prayers:**

**Families who have lost loved ones:**

Bob Radder

**Those struggling with health issues:**

Sarah Arnold

Heidi Konen

Brenda Voland

Darlene Horneck

Helen Henning

Tom Lefeber

Jessica Horneck

Dawson Horneck

Crystal

Elizabeth Quackenboss (Nicole Watson's Gmother)

Marie Rietbrock

Daisy Sippel

Dana (Melissa K's sister)

Mary Beth Molitor

Sandra Tesch

Gary Steinhardt

Neal (Louie's Brother)

**Those unable to worship with us:**

Merlin and Doris Mae Ninmer

**Other Concerns:**

Those affected by war in Israel.

Those affected by the earthquake in Afghanistan.

**This Week at Bethlehem:**

**Today Sunday 12/3:** 8am Sunday School; 9:30am Worship w/ Communion

**Monday 12/4:**

**Tuesday 12/6:**

**Wednesday 12/6:** ~Happy Birthday Joe Schmidt and Mark Wirtz!

**Thursday 12/7:** ~Happy Birthday Leah Henning!

**Friday 12/8:** ~Happy Birthday Mavryk Suttner!!

**Saturday 12/9:**

**Sunday 12/10:** 8am Sunday School; 9:30am Worship

**December Pantry Items:**

**Box of Cereal**

ADVENT

# 153 Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus

F C F  $\frac{Gm}{F} \frac{C7}{E} F$  C Dm C  $\frac{E}{A}$   $\frac{C7}{G}$  F  $\frac{E}{A}$   $\frac{Gm}{Bb}$  Dm C F

1 Come, thou long - ex - pect-ed Je - sus, born to set thy peo-ple free;  
2 Born thy peo - ple to de - liv - er, born a child and yet a king,

F C F  $\frac{Gm}{F} \frac{C7}{E} F$  C Dm C  $\frac{E}{A}$   $\frac{C7}{G}$  F  $\frac{E}{A}$   $\frac{Gm}{Bb}$  Dm C F

from our fears and sins re - lease us; let us find our rest in thee.  
born to reign in us for - ev - er, now thy gra - cious king - dom bring.

Am Dm Gm7 C7 Dm7  $\frac{C7}{E}$  F  $\frac{E}{E}$  Dm  $\frac{E}{A}$  G $\sharp$  Gm Bb maj7 Csus C

Is - rael's strength and con - so - la - tion, hope of all the earth thou art;  
By thine own e - ter - nal Spir - it rule in all our hearts a - lone;

$\frac{E}{A}$  F6  $\frac{Gm}{F}$   $\frac{C7}{E}$  F  $\frac{E}{E}$   $\frac{Bm7(b5)}{D}$   $\frac{C7}{E}$   $\frac{Bb}{D}$   $\frac{C7}{E}$  F  $\frac{F7}{A}$  Bb  $\frac{E}{A}$  Bb  $\frac{F}{C}$  C7 F

dear De - sire of ev - ery na - tion, Joy of ev - ery long - ing heart.  
by thine all - suf - fi - cient mer - it raise us to thy glo - rious throne.